

Recovering the Resilient Inner Self


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Linda Graham, MFT
linda@lindagraham-mft.net
www.lindagraham-mft.net

Resonant Relationships Foster Resilience

The roots of resilience are to be found in the felt sense of being held in the mind and heart of an empathic, attuned, and self-possessed other.

- Diana Fosha, PhD



Ah, the comfort,
The inexpressible comfort
Of feeling safe with a person.
Having neither to weigh out thoughts
Nor words,
But pouring them all right out, just as they are,
Chaff and grain together;
Certain that a faithful hand
Will take them and sift them;
Keeping what is worth keeping and,
With the breath of kindness,
Blow the rest away.

- Dinah Craik

Wiser Self

- Imagine yourself five years from now: wise, compassionate, good, strong, alive and vibrant
- Ask this Wiser Self: how did you become like this? What did you have to overcome or let go of to become like this? What one word of advice do you have for me?
- Inhabit this Wiser Self briefly; what does it feel like to become your Wiser Self?

Seeing Ourselves as Others See Us

- Imagine sitting across from someone who loves you unconditionally
- Imagine switching places with them; see yourself as they see you; feel why they love you and delight in you; take in the good
- Imagine being yourself again; taking in the love and affection coming to you; savor and absorb.

Cultivating Self-Acceptance

The curious paradox is, the moment I accept myself just as I am, then I can change.

- Carl Rogers

Even though...

I feel lost and confused...

my finances are a mess...

I feel like it's all my fault that my wife left...

I still deeply and completely love and accept myself

Using Self-Compassion to Change Relationship to Inner Critic

- CHANGE RELATIONSHIP TO INNER CRITIC rather than getting rid of it
- Identify typical message/tone of inner critic
- Write letter to a friend describing reactions to inner critic
- (You write) letter from friend offering empathy, encouragement, support, suggestions
- Read friend's letter to you; write a response

The Guest House - Rumi

This being human is a guest-house.

Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,

Some momentary awareness come

As an unexpected visitor.


Welcome and entertain them all!

Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,

who violently sweep your house

empty of its furniture,

still, treat each guest honorably.



He may be clearing you
out for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

- Rumi

Welcome Them All

- Wiser Self welcomes to the “party”
- characters that embody positive and negative parts of the self
- with curiosity and acceptance of the message or gift of each part and
- honors each part of the “inner committee”

Listening to the Wisdom of the Wiser Self

- Bring to mind a current difficulty with another person
- Imagine your Wiser Self having a dialogue with this difficult person
- Overhear how your Wiser Self handles the situation
- Listen for advice or wisdom from Wiser Self

Wished for Outcome

- Evoke memory of what did happen
- Imagine new behaviors, new players, new resolution
- Hold new outcome in awareness, strengthening and refreshing
- Notice shift in perspective of experience, of self

Deep Listening

The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention....A loving silence often has far more power to heal and to connect than the most well-intentioned words.

- Rachel Naomi Remen, M.D.

Questions for Deep Listening

- What brings you joy in your life?
- What has brought you sorrow?
- What worries you now?
- When have you found courage in dark times?
- What are you grateful for?
- What are you proud of?

